

For the past few years, the heads of State agencies have been taking an increasingly active part in this vital national defense program. I feel that in this State we are taking a lead in such participation, and that is the way that I want it to be. I believe that all our State units should be doing real thinking and working on this activity. They have a most important role, and I am certain that you as county directors can expect that they will do their part.

Before I go further, I would like to commend you officially and personally for the work that you have done during the past year. About three weeks ago, I was in Pikesville to take part in the dedication ceremonies for the Pikesville Fire Hall, where you held your dinner last evening. At that time, I had the privilege of praising the volunteer firemen for their service to the community. This is actually what Civil Defense directors and their assistants are doing. I know full well that some of you are serving as volunteers, some are receiving token payments, and some are fully paid. No matter what the remuneration, the service that you render is similar and cannot be measured in dollars and cents.

The Civil Defense program on the federal, state and local levels has been growing by leaps and bounds in the past two years. Your job is becoming increasingly difficult and time consuming. But, it is easy to see that the results are also growing by the same leaps and bounds. General Van Brunt and his staff are in constant contact with me and with my staff. All of us in Annapolis are well aware of civil defense developments. We are cognizant of the multitude of problems and also of the progress made.

I should like to discuss for a few moments some of the highlights of the progress we have made since we were together at our last annual meeting. Especially impressive to me was the Governor's Seminar for Industry in Civil Defense conducted last spring. This is the first time that leaders of industry, business, and banking had the opportunity to get together and discuss frankly their mutual problems of protection and training under civil defense. They had the opportunity of hearing fine presentations from experts on the federal level. That these people of private enterprise turned out in large numbers for this meeting was proof that they were vitally interested in making a valuable contribution to national defense. I might add as an aside that they were meeting in competition with the opening of the baseball season — a real test of patriotism, if I ever saw one.

Next I think it is appropriate to turn our attention for a few moments to the national shelter program and its implications in